

10.0 Conclusions

Due to population growth in Columbia County and the resulting increase in travel demand, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Office of Planning in conjunction with Columbia County initiated a study to develop a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to serve the entire County through the planning horizon, 2025. Recommended projects were identified and selected according to all applicable rules and regulations with the intent of enhancing the quality of life for Columbia County residents and visitors. Efforts were taken to ensure that proposed projects impacted the community as little as possible while providing maximum benefits.

As part of this effort a travel demand model was developed for the portion of the County not currently served by the Augusta-Richmond County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This area primarily consisted of the non-urbanized portion of the County. This model, named as the Columbia Model, is an extension of the existing Augusta-Richmond Transportation Study (ARTS) model and was used to evaluate existing future travel conditions through Columbia County. This tool can be updated and modified to accommodate changes with respect to demographics, land use, employment, the road network and other elements impacting the transportation system. It will remain a valuable tool for updating the Transportation Plan.

TEI coordinated with GDOT, Columbia County, cities within the County and other partners in the planning, development, review, and approval of study alternatives and the LRTP. Additionally, a comprehensive and interactive public involvement program was conducted to ensure that alternative transportation improvements were not only coordinated with various governments, but afforded individual citizens and interested groups the opportunity to provide their input in developing and evaluating planned improvements to the transportation network.

The end product for this study was a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) that provided for the efficient movement of people and goods within and through Columbia County through the horizon year of this study (2025). Interim year analysis was conducted for the years 2007 and 2012. As part of this effort existing and future operating conditions were documented for the following modes: highways, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, freight, transit, railways and airports.

This document should be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure that the planning factors and other assumptions are still relevant and effectively address transportation needs. This document should serve as the foundation for Columbia County transportation planning efforts and a starting point for addressing transportation needs.